

SCRIPT INTRODUCTION

64 NEIL GAIMAN

Then I stripped them, scalp from
skull, and my hunting dogs fed full
And their teeth I threaded neatly
on a thong.

And I wiped my mouth and said,
"It is well that they are dead."
"For I know my work is right and
theirs were wrong."

But my Totem saw the shame;
From his ridgepole-shrine he came,
And he told me in a vision of the night:—
"There are nine and sixty ways of
constructing tribal wars,
And every single one of them is right!"

Rudyard Kipling.
IN THE NEOLITHIC AGE. 1895

It took a little time before I could be persuaded to allow a script to be published.

For the same reason that a magician doesn't want to let you backstage when he rehearses, for the same reason you should never wander around a film set: it spoils the magic when you know how it's done.

But we all have a craving to see behind the illusion. We want to know how the magician managed to saw the lady in half without spilling blood, and put her together afterwards, apparently unharmed; we want to wander the studio backlots and stare at the backless houses. And some of us want to know how a comic gets written.

I did.

I have always wanted to write comics. (That's not strictly true: I have always wanted to write, to tell stories. Comics were and are one of the media I wanted to tell stories with.)

But I could never figure it out; how did a writer get the story in his head onto a comics page? What did a comics script look like? What did a comics writer do?

I eventually found out, by asking someone who wrote comics (it was Alan Moore—one of the best writers ever to work in this medium) and getting him to show me what a script looked like, and how it was laid out. This he did, on one side of notebook paper.

Once I knew what a comics script looked like, the rest was easy. (No, that's not true. The rest was pretty difficult, and every story presents its own set of problems. But you know what I mean.)

Which is why I eventually agreed to allow this script to be printed. I've even added some marginal notations, and dug out from my files the folded, stapled mini-comic for this issue. (I always make a small doodled version of the comic while I'm writing, to let me know how many panels I'm putting on a page, and to suggest ideas of layout and storytelling.)

Let me throw in a warning before you begin to read the script.

This is only how I write a comics script. Specifically how I write SANDMAN.

There are thousands of people out in the world writing comics, and none of the others write scripts quite like this. Some just write a sequence of panel descriptions, not worrying how they'll fall on the page. Some draw doodles of what they want for an artist, with the dialogue in the margins. Sometimes the writers just suggest a plot, and then come back to it at lettering stage and write the dialogue then. Sometimes they write something closer to a movie script, just dialogue and action, and let the artists break down the story into panels.

These are all valid ways of writing a comics script. I've used a few of them myself. (But not for SANDMAN.)

A few writers put in much more detail than you'll see in this script. Some writers use far less. Some writers don't know or care who'll be drawing the story they're writing. Some do. (I do). Some artists write and draw (and often letter and colour) their own comics, and they have different ways again of writing scripts for themselves.

Which means, I suppose, that this is a typical comics script, insofar as every script is atypical. And it's the way I write SANDMAN.

(All the other ways of writing scripts are right, too. That's what the quotation at the top of the page is about.)

Each SANDMAN script is a letter to the artist (I drive Karen Berger, my long-suffering editor, crazy, by refusing to write a script unless I know who's going to draw it; if you write for an artist you can play to their strengths. It makes you look good); and this is a letter to Kelley Jones. (It was the first time we'd ever worked together; and working with Kelley has been fun. He's a terrific artist and a nice person.)

We picked this script to 'Calliope' for this book as probably the most interesting for a casual reader the script for 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' is longer and technically far more complex (it was much the hardest of these scripts to write), but it's also probably a lot less interesting simply to read, or so I have been assured.

To reiterate: this isn't *How To Write Comics The Neil Gaiman Way*. It's a script for 'Calliope'. It's being printed here to satisfy your curiosity (if you have any) about what a SANDMAN script looks like.

There are a number of talented people involved in the production of SANDMAN. In this issue, after Kelley pencilled it, Todd Klein lettered the comic, then Malcolm Jones inked it, going over Kelley's pencils in black ink, getting the artwork to a point at which it could be reproduced (and incidentally adding a great deal to the look of the book), Robbie Busch coloured it, and somewhere in the background Karen Berger and Tom Peyer knocked themselves out making sure that everything made sense, got from place to place on time, and that we all got paid.

If you've read 'Calliope' already, you know the story. Now you're going to see the script.

You don't have to read it, if you don't want to.

But for those of you who do, welcome backstage.

Let us show you how it was done...

Neil Gaiman

HI KELLEY,

WELCOME TO THE WEIRD WORLD OF SANDMAN. WHAT WE'RE DOING IS A SERIES OF SHORT STORIES FOR FOUR OR FIVE ISSUES HERE, I'VE FINISHED THE DOLL'S HOUSE STORYLINE, AND THERE WAS A WHILE TOWARD THE END OF THE STORYLINE WHEN I JUST COULDN'T TAKE IT ANY MORE -- PARTLY BECAUSE I'D KEEP GETTING NEW IDEAS FOR STORIES AND BE UNABLE TO GET THEM IN, AND ALSO BECAUSE I WANTED TO DO A FEW TOTALLY SELF-CONTAINED STORIES THAT I COULD GET OVER WITH IN 24 PAGES. THE WORRY THAT I DIDN'T HAVE A CLUE HOW DOLL'S HOUSE WAS GOING TO END (WHICH I DIDN'T, UNTIL I GOT THROUGH SANDMAN 15) WAS GETTING PRETTY NERVE-WRACKING...

THIS IS THE FIRST OF THEM. I'M CALLING THE SHORT STORIES "DREAM COUNTRY." INCIDENTALLY, KELLEY, I WRITE PRETTY FULL SCRIPT, FOR THE MOST PART. HAVING SAID THAT, IT'S A GUIDE: IF YOU SEE A WAY TO IMPROVE IT, MAKE IT WORK BETTER, THEN GO FOR IT. YOU'RE THE ARTIST, AFTER ALL.

OK -- LET'S GO.

THEY SAY THAT ON AMERICAN COP SHOWS A LOT.

ODD FACTS AND COINCIDENCES DEPT: SO FAR THE SANDMANS I'VE STARTED AND THEN HAD TO RESTART, BECAUSE THEY WERE HEADING OFF IN THE WRONG DIRECTION WERE: 2, 7, 12 AND NOW THIS ONE, 17. EVERY FIVE ISSUES...

OKAY KELLEY -- THE BAD NEWS. THE REASON WHY THIS IS PROBABLY GOING TO BE SLIGHTLY LATE IS ALSO THE REASON THAT IT BEARS NO RESEMBLANCE TO THE STORY I TOLD YOU ON THE PHONE. THIS IS BECAUSE I STARTED THE ONE I TOLD YOU ABOUT, SEX AND VIOLETS, TWICE, GOT SEVEN PAGES INTO ONE VERSION AND TEN PAGES, THE SECOND TIME, ON A TOTALLY DIFFERENT TREATMENT, AND EACH TIME IT DIED ON THE PAGE, WHICH MEANT THAT I BASICALLY HAD TO DECIDE WHETHER TO TRY AGAIN, OR TO STRIP THE STORY DOWN AS FAR AS I COULD, TAKE WHAT I COULD, AND START AGAIN. I SUSPECT AT SOME POINT I'LL COME BACK TO OLD PUCK, BUT IN THE MEANTIME WE'VE GOT A DIFFERENT STORY ABOUT A DIFFERENT MOUSE, AND ABOUT THE TWO MEN WHO HAVE HELD HER IN THRALD, AND ABOUT THE SANDMAN, AND HIS REVENGE ON THEM. IT'S A DARKER STORY THAN THE OTHER, CREEPIER AND LESS COMFORTING.

THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT I'M 99% SURE I'LL WORK THIS TIME, AND I HOPE YOU ENJOY DRAWING IT AS MUCH YOU WOULD HAVE THE OTHER.

EDITORS NOTE: The script comments that appear on the following pages, in red and blue ink, are by Neil Gaiman and Kelley Jones, respectively.

Calliope.

Page 1 panel 1

WE ARE LOOKING AT THE FACE OF RICK MADOC. NO PANEL BORDER -
HE'S IN CLOSE UP, FULL FACE, LOOKING AT SOMETHING BELOW HIM
WITH AN EXPRESSION OF INTERESTED DISTASTE. HE'S THIN, MID-
THIRTIES, RED SHORT-CUT HAIR. NOT A CLASSICAL COMIC BOOK FACE -
HE'S GOOD-LOOKING IN A JOHN LENNONISH SORT OF WAY.

Caption - top right: May 1986.

Madoc: I don't have any idea.

Madoc: So what is it? It smells quite disgusting.

Page 1 panel 2

PULL BACK. WE'RE IN A ROOM IN MADOC'S HOUSE: HIS STUDY.
BOOKSHELVES ON THE WALLS, A DESK WITH A WORD PROCESSOR ON
IT. A SET OF ENCYCLOPEDIAS. FAIRLY MODERN. MAYBE SOME
PAINTINGS ON THE WALL. LITTLE STATUES HERE AND THERE. THERE'S
A SLIM TELEPHONE ON A TABLE IN ONE CORNER, AND, IN THE
OPPOSITE CORNER OF THE ROOM, A DOOR TO THE WORLD OUTSIDE, BUT
THAT'S ALL BACKGROUND, AND WE DON'T NEED TO PUSH IT HERE
DROP IT IN AS WE MOVE AROUND THE ROOM, LOOKING AT THESE
PEOPLE. WE'RE LOOKING AT MADOC, WHO IS WEARING A BROWN
LEATHER JACKET, THE SHIRT AND JEANS, AND A YOUNGER MAN, IN
GLASSES, A DOCTOR (ALTHOUGH NOT WEARING A WHITE COAT) FELIX
GARRISON. DR. GARRISON IS HOLDING SOMETHING OUT - IT'S BLACK,
LIKE A LARGE, HAIRY STONE, OR A FOSSILISED TRIBBLE COVERED IN
SLIME. IT'S A TRICHINOBEOZOA - YOU MAY BE ABLE TO FIND A
REFERENCE PICTURE OF SOME KIND IN A MEDICAL DICTIONARY. THE
DR LOOKS RATHER PLEASED WITH HIMSELF. IT'S EARLY EVENING IN
EARLY SUMMER OR LATE SPRING.

Garrison: It's what you were asking for. It's a bezoar.

Madoc: Hang on, I thought they were like, precious stones?

Page 1 panel 3

WE'RE LOOKING AT THE GUNKY, HORRIBLE, CALCIFIED MASS, HELD IN
THE DOCTOR'S HAND, IN CLOSE UP. IT LOOKS REVOLTING. MAKE IT
LOOK HAIRY AND SLIMY AT THE SAME TIME. IMAGINE A CAT-SICKED-
UP HAIRBALL TO THE MAX...

DR: Most of them are.

This is a trichinobezoar -- it's made of hair. I cut it out of a young
woman's stomach this afternoon. Lovely long hair she had. Trouble was,
she'd been sucking it, chewing it, -- swallowing the hairs.
Must've been doing it for years.

Page 1 panel 4

PULL BACK AGAIN. WE CAN SEE, CLOSE TO US, THE DR. LEANING DOWN, OR CROUCHING, GETTING A BOOK OUT OF HIS LARGE BLACK DOCTOR'S BAG. HE'S LEFT THE THING ON THE TABLE, AND RICK IS STARING AT IT IN DISGUST. POSSIBLY POKING AT IT WITH A FINGER.

Dr: Technically that's known as the Rapunzel syndrome. Anyway, it's a bezoar. Mission accomplished.

Madoc: It's disgusting. But thanks. What do I owe you, Felix?

Page 1 panel 5

OKAY -- WE'RE LOOKING AT THE TWO OF THEM. FELIX IS HOLDING OUT A BOOK TOWARDS RICK, A LITTLE NERVOUSLY. RICK'S JUST PLEASED NOT TO HAVE TO HAVE PAID ANY MONEY FOR THIS THING. IF WE CAN SEE THE BOOK -- IT'S A HARDBACK, BY THE WAY -- IT'S CALLED THE CABARET OF DR CALIGARI, BY RICHARD MADOC.

Dr: Oh, nothing.

It would have only been incinerated, or popped into a jar for students to stare at. Just don't tell anyone where you got it.

And, um, I was wondering if you'd sign this for me?

Rick: Sure. No problem.

Page 2 panel 1

WE ARE LOOKING AT THE TITLE PAGE OF THE BOOK -- WE CAN SEE PRINTED OR TYPESET, IN BLACK, THE CABARET OF DR CALIGARI, RICK'S NAME, AND UNDERNEATH THAT, IN BLUE OVERLAY LETTERING, HANDWRITING -- POSSIBLY WE CAN SEE A PEN AT THE BOTTOM FINISHING OFF THE SIGNATURE. KELLEY, UNLESS YOU WANT TO DRAW ANY HANDS HERE, OR THE PEN, THIS IS PROBABLY ALL TODD'S PANEL.

Book title -- black printing: The Cabaret of Dr Caligari.

By Richard Madoc.

Handwriting -- blue overlay: For Felix Garrison, with thanks, Rick Madoc.

Rick: (off): There you go.

Page 2 panel 2

FELIX, HOLDING THE BOOK AT ARMS' LENGTH, IN BOTH HANDS, READING THE INSCRIPTION. HE LOOKS REALLY PLEASED. Felix: This is great. It's a real thrill for me, to, you know, be able to do something for one of my heroes. I loved the book. Amazing stuff.

Phone: Well, how much have you got to go?

Rick: Nearly finished.

Phone: Is it finished yet?

Phone: Listen, the novel's almost nine months overdue, and they're threatening to

cause trouble. You're in breach of contract, Rick.

SIMILAR SHOT, ONLY RICK LOOKS REALLY MISERABLE, UNCOMFORTABLE, SHIFTY. AS IF HE DOESN'T WANT THIS CONVERSATION.

Page 2 panel 6

Rick: Oh. Hi Harry.

again today.

Phone: Rick? It's Harry. Listen, we have to talk. Your publishers were onto me

Rick: Hello? Richard Madoc speaking.

KEEP THE PHONE IN THE SAME POSITION IT WAS BEFORE, BUT RICK IS NOW IN THE FOREGROUND, AND HE'S PICKED UP THE PHONE. IS TALKING INTO IT. POSSIBLY WE CAN SEE FELIX GOING OUT THE DOOR INTO THE STREET, OR POSSIBLY HE SIMPLY ISN'T IN THE ROOM ANY LONGER.

Page 2 panel 5

FX: Near phone, small: Breep breep.

Felix: No problem. I know how busy you are. I'll just let myself out, then. Bye.

Rick: Uh, that's the phone. Listen, thanks again for the thing.

FOR THE PHONE, AND FELIX, PICKING UP HIS BAG, AND PREPARING TO LEAVE. FOREGROUND -- THE PHONE. IN THE BACKGROUND WE CAN SEE RICK, HEADING

Page 2 panel 4

Rick: Oh. Great.

Felix: I heard you were writing a sequel to the Cabaret -- I'm really excited.

Rick: It's research, really.

Heh.

Rick: Like you were asking the other day -- where do writers get our crazy ideas?

WE'RE LOOKING AT RICK. HE SEEMS SLIGHTLY UNCOMFORTABLE AT THIS.

Page 2 panel 3

Felix: So, um, what do you need the bezoar for?

NOW, WE'RE IN ERASMUS FRY'S HOUSE FOR THE NEXT FOUR PAGES, AND IT'S CLAUSTROPHOBIC AND CRAMPED - LONG, DIMLY LIT CORRIDORS, CRAMMED WITH OLD STATUARY AND PHOTOGRAPHS AND BOOKS. BLACK PANEL BORDERS TO BLEED FROM HERE UNTIL THE END OF PAGE SEVEN. THREE PANELS ON THE TOP FLOOR. THEY'RE IN THE HALLWAY. IT'S DARK AND GLOOMY, WITH LARGE OLD PHOTOGRAPHS HANGING ON THE WALLS. THE OLD MAN IS SHUFFLING DOWN THE CORRIDOR WITH THE YOUNGER MAN, TALLER, BEHIND HIM. THE HALLWAY IS ALSO SET WITH MIRRORS, REFLECTING THE FACES OF THE MEN. ERASMUS IS NOT A NICE OLD MAN.

Erasmus: How are you, M'boy? Written anything profound and stirring recently?

Rick: You know I haven't, Mister Fty.

Erasmus: No. We'll go into my study, and you can show me my present.

THEY'RE NOW IN THE OLD MAN'S STUDY. THE OLD MAN IS STANDING UP AND POURING TWO GLASSES OF SHERRY FROM A CUT-GLASS DECANTER. WHEN WE SEE IT, THE STUDY IS EXPENSIVELY FURNISHED, DOMINATED BY A LARGE BLACK-AND-WHITE PHOTOGRAPH OF ERASMUS AGED ABOUT TWENTY. EMPTY FIREPLACE. IT'S ALL DUSTY. IT LOOKS LIKE IT HASN'T BEEN CLEANED OR TIDIED FOR YEARS. THERE ARE A COUPLE OF ARMCHAIRS IN THERE, AND A DESK. RICK IS ABOUT TO SIT IN AN ARMCHAIR. HE'S STILL HOLDING THE PLASTIC BAG.

Erasmus: Ah -- an excuse for a sherry.

Erasmus: Cheap stuff, of course. I'm not wasting the good stuff on a little shit like you.

ERASMUS, SITTING IN THE ARMCHAIR, RAISING THE GLASS OF SHERRY TO HIS LIPS. HE'S ABOUT TO GIVE A LECTURE TO RICK. HE'S PROBABLY RAISING ONE FINGER, OR LEANING HIS CHIN ON ONE HAND. HE'S NOT SMILING. HE LOOKS VERY COMFORTABLE.

Erasmus: Let me tell you about Bezars. Word comes from the Persian. Pad-zahr. It means counter-poison. Antidote. Mainly found in the stomachs of goats and gazelles.

-DESCRIPTION IN PARAGRAPHS
Book

AGAIN, RUN THIS ACROSS THE MIDDLE OF THE PAGE. THE TWO OF THEM SITTING IN ARMCHAIRS, OPPOSITE EACH OTHER. THE YOUNG MAN, ANTSY, SCARED, NERVOUS; THE OLD MAN, COMFORTABLE, POWERFUL. RICK HAS PUT HIS SHERRY DOWN ON THE FLOOR, ISN'T DRINKING IT. WE CAN SEE BOOKSHELVES ACROSS THE WAY -- POSSIBLY A CHESS SET IN ONE CORNER. THEY'RE IN THE LOWER HALF OF THE PANEL, LEAVING PLENTY OF ROOM FOR THE HUGE WORD BALLOONS.

After all, I got the fame and the glory. I created the novels, the poems, the plays...

Erasmus: They say one ought to woo her kind, but I must say I found force most efficacious...

Erasmus: The hardest part was getting her back to England.

TOWARDS US. ERASMUS IS IN THE FRONT, OF COURSE.

KEY, WHICH HE'S HOLDING IN FRONT OF HIM. I SUSPECT THEY'RE WALKING SEE THEM, BUT IT'S VERY GLOOMY AND ILL-LIT, ERASMUS HAS PULLED OUT A WRONG, THEN BE MY GUEST. IT'S REALLY DARK. WE OUGHT TO BE ABLE TO IF YOU WANT TO MESS WITH THE ANGLES, SO THE INSIDE SEEMS SUBTLY THEY'RE AT THE TOP OF THE STAIRS, WALKING DOWN A NARROW CORRIDOR.

Page 5 panel 5

She was bathing in a spring, and I caught her and bound her with Moly -- sorcerer's garlic, as it's sometimes called -- and with certain rituals.

87 next year.

Erasmus: I caught her on Mount Helicon, you know. 1927, Greece. I was 27. I'll be

WHERE HE'S GOING.

NOVELS OF THIRTY YEARS AGO. RICK IS NERVOUS, ERASMUS KNOWS EXACTLY SHADOWS OR HERE COMES A CANDLE, THINGS THAT SOUND LIKE FAMOUS NEXT PANELS, BUT THEY'RE THINGS LIKE A STRANGER IN EDEN OR HALL OF IN LARGE LETTERS. I DON'T KNOW IF WE CAN SEE ANY TITLES IN THIS OR THE BOOK-COVERS AND PLAYBILLS, ALL WITH THE NAME ERASMUS PRY ON THEM, THEY'RE WALKING UP STAIRS, NOW, A NARROW, DARK STAIRWAY, HUNG WITH

Page 5 panel 4

Erasmus: Never mind. I have an old coat you may use.

Rick: Clothes? I didn't know I...

Did you bring any clothes?

I suppose that you want her, now.

Erasmus: I will put the bezoar with the rest of them.

ERASMUS AND RICK ARE BOTH STANDING UP, NOW. ERASMUS HAS EXTENDED AN ARM, IS USHERING RICK OUT OF THE ROOM.

Page 5 panel 3

Erasmus: I'm sorry. I'm lecturing again. An old writer with no-one else to talk to gets fond of the sound of his own voice...

Erasmus: Oh yes. Rapunzel, let down your hairball. A genuine trichinobezoar. The smell comes from the partly digested particles of food, trapped in--

Page 7 panel 1

(JUST A BRIEF APOLOGY -- I'M AFRAID ERASMUS TALKS AN AWFUL LOT, AND MAKES SURE HE TAKES THE LONGEST POSSIBLE ROUTE THROUGH ANY SENTENCE. I TRY TO KEEP HIM SHORT-WINDED, BUT HE DOES RATHER TEND TO OVERLOAD ANY PANELS HE'S IN WITH WORDS. OH WELL -- AT LEAST THIS IS HIS LAST PAGE ON STAGE, AS IT WERE... IF NECESSARY YOU COULD SLIP THIS PANEL ONTO THE BOTTOM RIGHT HAND CORNER OF THE SPLASH PAGE, BUT I THINK IT'LL WORK BETTER AS A SPLASH.) WE'RE LOOKING AT CALLIOPE, IN CLOSE UP. A FACE SHOT, SHADOWY, AS SHE STARES STRAIGHT OUT AT US. SHE'S COME OUT OF THE ROOM, AND IS NOW IN THE HALLWAY, SO THE LIGHT IS DIRECTLY ABOVE HER, CASTING LOW SHADOWS FROM HER NOSE AND ACROSS HER EYES. I TEND TO IMAGINE HER AS A STARVED YOUNG BRIGITTE BARDET, BUT THAT'S POSSIBLY BECAUSE THERE'S A BRIGITTE BARDET MOVIE ON LATE NIGHT TV RIGHT NOW. SHE HAS A COMBINATION OF GRANDEUR AND INNOCENCE, HERE, BUT OBVIOUSLY HATES ERASMUS, IS COUNTING THE DAYS AND THE HOURS UNTIL HER IMPRISONMENT IS OVER. HE MAY HAVE HER SPIRIT, BUT HE DOESN'T HAVE HER SOUL, AND SHE SAYS:

Calliope: What would you with me now, Erasmus? Am I now to perform for your amusement? Is this man to be our audience?

Page 7 panel 2

ANOTHER FULL-PANEL FACE SHOT, HEAD AND SHOULDERS, THIS TIME OF ERASMUS, PROBABLY NOT LOOKING DIRECTLY AT US, BUT OFF SLIGHTLY. HE'S BITCHY AND OLD AND HATES EVERYTHING, ESPECIALLY HER.

Erasmus: Don't get yourself all worked up, Calliope.

No, this is Richard Madoc. He's a novelist -- or at least, he's written one extremely successful first novel, and has found himself quite unable to write anything else.

Page 7 panel 3

NOW WE'RE LOOKING AT RICK, AGAIN FULL FACE, AS HE STARES AT US, LIPS PRESSED CLOSE TOGETHER, STARING AT THE GIRL (AT US) HIS EXPRESSION UNREADABLE. MAKE THESE THREE PANELS VERY SIMILAR, JUST WITH DIFFERENT PEOPLE IN THEM, IF YOU SEE WHAT I MEAN.

Erasmus (off): Richard, this is Calliope. The youngest of the nine muses. She was Homer's muse, so she ought to be good enough for you.

Calliope, I'm giving you to Richard. You're his now.

Page 7 panel 4

PULL BACK NOW. CLOSE TO US, ON THE RIGHT OF PANEL, HER BACK TO US, IS CALLIOPE, AND BEYOND HER, FACING US, ARE THE OLD MAN, AND, TALLER AND YOUNGER AND ILL-AT-EASE, MADOC. HER ARMS ARE NOW AT HER SIDES.

Calliope: But you said -- you told me, you promised that you would free me before you died. You said I could have my freedom...

Erasmus: Put not your trust in princes, my dear.

THE OLD MAN HOLDING UP THE BEZOAR, ADMIRING IT ON HIS OPEN HAND.
HE'S IN LECTURE MODE AGAIN.

Page 5 panel 2

Erasmus: Let me see my present.

Erasmus: Of course I know what it's like. Don't be a fool, boy.

THE OLD MAN HAS STOOD UP, IS LOOKING DOWN SHARPLY. HE'S REACHING
OUT HIS HAND.

Page 5 panel 1

Rick: When you can't think of a single thing worth saying, a single character that
people could believe in, a single story that hasn't been told a thousand times
before...

MOVE IN ON RICK. HIS FACE IS SHADOWY, AND PAINED. IT'S LIKE HE'S BAKING
HIS SOUL HERE.

Page 4 panel 7

Rick: When it's just you, and a blank sheet of paper?

I haven't written a word in a year -- nothing I haven't thrown away! Do you know
what that's like?

Rick: Will you shut up?

SAME SHOT, BUT RICK'S HALF-STOOD UP, PUSHING HIMSELF UP WITH HIS ARMS
AT HIS SIDE. HE LOOKS UPSET, IRRITATED, ANGRY.

Page 4 panel 6

Erasmus (off): For the common people, apothecaries would lend out bezouars at
extortionate rates, for a week, or a fortnight...

THREE PANELS ON THE BOTTOM TIER. WE'RE LOOKING AT RICK -- HE'S SITTING
THERE LISTENING TO THIS STUFF, GETTING MORE AND MORE IRRITATED -- HE'S
PROBABLY LOOKING UPWARDS, BORED AND NERVOUS. NEARLY EXASPERATED.
THE BACK OF THE ARMCHAIR FRAMES HIS HEAD.

Page 4 panel 5

Queen Elizabeth the First had a bezoar set in gold, with unicorn's horn, given to
her by John Dee, her spy and magician.

Erasmus: Once believed to possess mystic powers: they can remedy poison, make
the sick well. Edward IV survived the effects of a poisoned wound, due solely to a
bezoar in his possession.

THEY'RE STANDING IN FRONT OF A DOOR. ERASMUS HAS PUT THE KEY INTO THE LOCK, AND IS TURNING THE KEY. ONE BARE BULB DANGLES FROM A PRAYED FLEX, LIGHTING THE HALLWAY, JUST, I MEAN, IT'S ABOUT A FIFTEEN WATT BULB, BUT IT'S A BULB.

Erasmus: I don't need her anymore, Madoc. And you do.

Here she is.

AND THEN WE GO OVER THE PAGE TO SEE WHAT'S IN THE ROOM...

PAGE 6 PANEL 1

SPLASH PAGE. DARK BORDER AROUND THE PAGE. WE'RE LOOKING STRAIGHT THROUGH THE OPEN DOOR - POSSIBLY THE PANEL BORDER IS THE DOORWAY. AND WE'RE LOOKING AT IS APPARENTLY A THIN, FIFTEEN-YEAR OR POSSIBLY JUST-SIXTEEN OLD GIRL. SHE'S STANDING THERE STARING AT US. SHE HAS A BEAUTIFUL FACE, WITH DEEP CHEEKBONES - SHE'S A GODDESS AFTER ALL - AND A THIN BODY. SHE LOOKS AS IF SHE'S BEEN STARVED FOR A COUPLE OF WEEKS. WE CAN SEE THE OUTLINE OF HER HIPBONES, AND NOT QUITE COUNT HER RIBS. SHE'S NAKED. SHE LOOKS VERY VULNERABLE - THIS IS THE VULNERABILITY OF NAKEDNESS; IF YOU'VE EVER SEEN ANY PHOTOS OF FAMINE VICTIMS, OR CONCENTRATION CAMP VICTIMS, THERE'S A POINT AT WHICH NAKEDNESS TOTALLY CEASES TO TITILLATE, INSTEAD JUST AROUSES FEELINGS OF PITY. (BILL SIENKIEWICZ CAUGHT IT PERFECTLY IN THE MENTAL HOSPITAL SEQUENCES IN ELIOTRA: ASSASSIN #1.) EITHER SHE HAS HER HANDS ON HER OPPOSITE SHOULDERS, HUGGING HERSELF, OR SHE'S COVERING HER BREASTS WITH ONE ARM, AND REACHING DOWN WITH HER OTHER HAND, COVERING HER PUBIC AREA WITH A HAND. IT'S NOT FALSE MODESTY - IT'S A WISH TO PROTECT HERSELF FROM. SHE DOESN'T LOOK SCARED - NERVOUS, PERHAPS, OR UNHAPPY MORE LIKE. SHE ALSO HAS MASSES OF SHAGGY BLONDISH HAIR, DOWN TO THE SMALL OF HER BACK. THE KEY HERE IS VULNERABILITY - THIS SHOULDN'T LOOK TITILLATING, IT'S NOT A HUBBA HUBBA KIND OF NAKED WOMAN SHOT; IT'S ONE THAT IT ALMOST HURTS TO LOOK AT. TEAR THEIR HEARTS OUT, KELLEY. SHE'S LIT BY THE MUTED BULB IN THE HALL. DIMLY BEHIND HER WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO MAKE OUT A CHEAP CAMP BED WITH A THIN BLANKET ON IT. AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PANEL, PREFERABLY IN THE KIND OF LETTERING WE HAD FOR THE TITLE OF #7, IS THE TITLE.

Erasmus (off, left): Her name's Calliope.

Title: Calliope.

And Credits.

At the bottom of the page, Sandman (logo) characters created by Gaiman, Kiehl and Dringenberg.

Kelly drew Calliope as
really really skinny,
with horribly protruding
ribs. Karen felt that
this was too extreme,
and when Malcolm inked
it he made her a
little less skinny...

Page 7 panel 5

BACK TO CALLIOPE. SHE'S CRYING, SILENTLY. ONE TEAR IS TRICKLING DOWN HER FACE. SHE'S RAISED A HAND TO HER MOUTH, BUT HER CHIN IS STILL RAISED PROUDLY.

Erasmus (off): Nor in an aging author who has never been what one might call a shining example when it came to keeping his word...

Writers are liars, my dear. Surely you have realised that by now?

Page 7 panel 6

PULL BACK AGAIN FOR A LONG SHOT. MADOC IS PUTTING A COAT AROUND CALLIOPE'S SHOULDERS. ERASMUS HAS TURNED HIS BACK ON BOTH OF THEM, IS WALKING TOWARDS US.

Erasmus: Take the little cow away, Madoc. I never want to see either of you again.

Page 7 panel 7

OUT ON THE STREET, NOW. MADOC AND CALLIOPE ARE STANDING THERE -- SHE'S WEARING THE COAT, BUTTONED UP, AND NOTHING UNDER IT, SO WE CAN SEE HER BARE LEGS AND FEET ON THE HARD SIDEWALK. ERASMUS IS STANDING IN THE DOORWAY, FACING THEM, FOR THE ONLY TIME, HE LOOKS VULNERABLE, INSECURE. HE LOOKS OLD.

Erasmus: However, if you ever happen to feel a spark of gratitude, you might want to persuade some publisher to bring 'Here Comes A Candle' back into print.

Erasmus: I was particularly proud of that one.

Page 8 panel 1

THIS IS OPPOSITE AN AD PAGE. OKAY. NOW, FOR THE FIRST TIME WE SLIDE OUT OF REAL-TIME AND INTO AN ALMOST MONTAGE MODE. OVER THE NEXT FEW PAGES WE'RE GOING TO COVER A FEW YEARS IN REAL TIME. WE'RE ALSO OPENING UP HERE, SO THE FEELING OF CLAUSTROPHOBIA, WE SHOULD HAVE GOT FROM THE LAST FEW PAGES, SINCE WE ENTERED FRY'S HOUSE, SHOULD BE BELIEVED. WHITE PANEL BORDERS HERE AGAIN, FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE PAGE 4. WE'RE LOOKING AT THE TOP, AT THE ROOM OF A HOUSE -- MADOC'S HOUSE, -- FROM OUTSIDE. WE CAN SEE THE BRICKWORK, AND A WINDOW, BARRED WITH A METAL GRILLE. THROUGH THE WINDOW WE CAN SEE, ON THE INSIDE, CALLIOPE, LOOKING AT US SILENTLY. SHE'S NAKED AGAIN, BUT WE CAN PROBABLY ONLY SEE HER HEAD AND BARE SHOULDERS, AND THE SIDE OF HER ARMS.

Caption: And Madoc took Calliope back to his home, and locked her in the topmost room, which he had prepared for her.

WHITE INK ON BLACK
FOR FIGURE OF CALLIOPE

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I changed "bare wooden floor
to "musty old camp-bed"
When I saw the art-work.

Page 8 panel 2

NOW I WANT TO TRY TO GET ACROSS THE RAPE, AND THE HORROROUS REASONS.

AND THE DOMINANCE, FAIRLY SUBTLY, DOING ALL THE WORK IN
THE READER'S HEAD. THE WHOLE THING SHOULD BE REALLY
UNDERSTATED. WHAT WE'RE ACTUALLY LOOKING AT IN THIS PAGE
ARE BARE WOODEN FLOORBOARDS, AND COMING IN FROM THE
RIGHT, WE CAN SEE CALLOPE'S LEFT ARM AND HAND, PALM
UPWARD, LAYING FLAT ON THE FLOOR. COMING DOWN FROM
ABOVE IS RICK'S RIGHT ARM; HIS HAND IS CLAMPED AROUND HER
WRIST, HOLDING IT DOWN TO THE GROUND. THAT'S ALL WE CAN
SEE.

Caption: His first action was to rape her, nervously, on the bare
wooden floor, musty old camp-bed.

Caption: She's not even human, he told himself. She's thousands of
years old. But her flesh was warm, and her breath was sweet, and
she choked back tears like a child whenever he hurt her.

I sent Kelley some
photos I took of my

Page 8 panel 3

WE ARE NOW DOWN IN HIS STUDY, FROM PAGE ONE, AND HIS -space, to give
SITTING DOWN IN THE CHAIR NEXT TO HIS WORD-PROCESSOR.
SMOKING A CIGARETTE. HE LOOKS VERY PLEASED WITH HIMSELF,
SMILING A LAZY SMILE, HIS FEET UP ON THE DESK. THE SMOKE
FROM THE CIGARETTE DRIFTS UPWARD. HE'S NOW BAREFOOT, AND
JUST WEARING JEANS AND A SINGLET.

Caption: It occurred to him momentarily that the old man might have
cheated him: given him a real girl. That he, Rick Madoc, might
possibly have done something wrong, even criminal...
[Although he left out
reproduced it
beneficially accurately

Caption: But afterwards, relaxing in his study, something shifted
inside his head.

Page 8 panel 4

WE'RE NOW BEHIND THE WORD PROCESSOR. WE CAN SEE THE
BACK OF HIS HEAD, PERHAPS HIS HANDS ON THE KEYBOARD. AND
TEXT THAT COULD BE REDUCED AND PUT ON THE SCREEN --
SCREEN. ANOTHER POSSIBILITY IS THAT WE CAN SEE HIS FACE
REFLECTED IN THE SCREEN, OR PARTLY REFLECTED ON ONE SIDE
OF THE SCREEN. IF WE CAN, HE'S SMILING.

Screen: CHAPTER THREE. "AND SOME IN VELVET GOWNS"

"Your face," he said to her. "What have you done to your face?"

Marion shrugged. "I wanted to look on the outside like I do on the
inside," she said simply, not putting down the knife.

OKAY -- THIS ONE RUNS ALL THE WAY ACROSS THE MIDDLE TIER. LEFT TO RIGHT, WE'RE LOOKING AT MELETE, MNEME, ALODE. NOW WE'RE PLAYING WITH A RUNNING THEME IN SANDMAN, OF THE TRIPLE GODDESS. HUNTING

Page 9 panel 4

Calliope: Ladies of Meditation, Remembrance and Song, hearken to me.
Calliope: To whom can I speak, in my grief? I who am laden with wretchedness.
RIGHT, WE'VE GOT A FINAL CLOSE-UP ON HER FACE, FRAMED BY THE FALLING HAIR, EYES LOOKING DOWN, OR HIDDEN BY LASHES.
The panel place went
meant we moved a
few of these balloons
around.

Page 9 panel 3

I implore you, ladies, deliver me from this place and this time.
Calliope: It is I, your daughter Calliope, who calls you, as I have called you a thousand times. I...
RIGHT, WE'RE ZOOMING IN ON HER, SO NOW WE'RE LOOKING AT HER CHEST TO HEAD HERE. SHE'S LOOKING DOWN -- HER HANDS STILL CLASPED IN FRONT OF HER. SHE'S PRAYING, AND SHE'S ALSO VERY SAD, HURTING INSIDE. SHE HAS NO HOPE THAT ANYONE WILL RESPOND.

Page 9 panel 2

Calliope: Gracious ladies, mother of the Carmene, hear my prayer. Calliope to emphasis of the Attic
FROM HER.
ALTHOUGH IT WOULD SHADOW HER BODY. WE'RE ABOUT FIVE FEET AWAY
ALTHOUGH IT'S NOT ACTUALLY DONE UP. IT'S LOOSE AND OPEN,
HOW ABOUT KEEPING HER IN THE COAT THAT SHE WAS IN BEFORE,
CLOTHED, SO SHE'S NOT AT EASE, NAKED. ACTUALLY, ON REFLECTION,
CLASSICALLY AS BEING DRESSED IN LIGHT SHIFTS: THEY WERE ALWAYS
THAT THE MUSES (UNLIKE THE GRACES) WERE ALWAYS PICTURED
COMFORTABLE WITH HER NAKEDNESS: HAVING SAID THAT, BEAR IN MIND
FRONT OF HER. SHE'S STILL SORT OF NAKED, BUT, ALONE, SHE'S MORE
OF THE ATTIC ROOM, IN THE CORNER OF THE ROOM, HANDS CLASPED IN
GRID. FIRST PANEL, WE'RE LOOKING AT CALLOPE, SITTING ON THE FLOOR
PANELS, THEN TWO PANELS BELOW THAT. BASICALLY IT'S A NINE-PANEL
OKAY, FIVE PANELS ON THE PAGE, IN THREE TIERS. TOP TIER OF THREE
that pages 9 and
should have covered
the original comic
ad placement in
the collection
together in this
Although they aren't

Page 9 panel 1

Caption: He had been writing for three hours before he switched on the word processor to write it down before it fled.

Caption: He had been writing for three hours before he switched on the word processor to write it down before it fled.